

Senator MCCAIN, Senator Cleland, Secretary O'Neill, Ambassador Wilson, General Shinseki, Richard Foster, Richard Clarke, Larry Lindsay—when will the character assassination, retribution, and intimidation end?

When will we say enough is enough?

The September 11 families—and our entire country—deserve better. Our democracy depends on it. And our Nation's future security depends on it.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. Who yields time?

ORDER OF PROCEDURE

Mr. REID. Mr. President, the minority has 30 minutes. I ask unanimous consent that our time be equally divided, with 7½ minutes going to Senator WYDEN, 7½ minutes to Senator SCHUMER, 7½ minutes to Senator DURBIN, and 7½ minutes to Senator STABENOW, in that order.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. Without objection, it is so ordered.

Mr. REID. I thank the Chair.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. The Senator from Oregon is recognized.

PERFECT STORM COMING

Mr. WYDEN. Mr. President, it is time for the Bush administration to end its campaign of inaction on gasoline price hikes. Tomorrow, OPEC will vote on whether there should be additional production cuts, and this very morning, the Saudi oil minister said OPEC should go ahead with its scheduled production cut in the month of April.

If they do, that is going to take 1 million barrels of oil off the market per day, when U.S. private oil supplies are already millions of barrels low and when U.S. gasoline prices are at record highs.

Folks on the west coast of the United States are getting clobbered by these gasoline price hikes. People in California pay considerably more than \$2 a gallon. Folks in my home State of Oregon are close behind, paying an average of more than \$1.80 in some of our towns.

There is a perfect storm coming with respect to these gasoline price hikes. The combination of the Bush administration filling the Strategic Petroleum Reserve at the wrong time, the fact we have these refinery cutbacks on the west coast that seem as much to boost profit as anything else, the Federal Trade Commission turning a blind eye to anticompetitive profits, and the shenanigans of OPEC are the factors that are coming together to create what I think could be a perfect storm with gasoline prices of \$3 a gallon.

On the OPEC issue, less than a month ago the head of the Energy Information Agency told me OPEC would make up the difference for the oil the U.S. Energy Department is putting in the Strategic Petroleum Reserve. I have to tell you, Mr. President, if you think

OPEC is going to be looking out for the American gasoline consumer, you have to think Colonel Sanders is looking out for the chickens. It simply does not add up.

For the life of me, I cannot understand the administration's insistence on continuing to swipe oil out of the private U.S. market and squirrel it away in the Strategic Petroleum Reserve at a time when the American consumer is getting clobbered each week at the gasoline station. The Bush administration needs to stop filling the Strategic Petroleum Reserve. The administration is spending American tax dollars to buy oil at record high prices and put it in the reserve, and apparently they are saying they will not stop it. But, in fact, they did stop filling the reserve when it helped the oil companies. They stopped filling the reserve in December 2002 when the oil companies needed more supply for refineries.

It seems to me the message today is what the administration is willing to do for the big oil companies they ought to do for the American consumer, and particularly the ones I represent on the west coast of the United States.

There is no substitute for leadership when American families are hurting financially and getting shellacked by these gasoline price hikes. It is interesting to note that when the President was a candidate in 2000, he said the President ought to be using his bully pulpit to jawbone OPEC. This administration is not doing that.

Last week, they took credit for oil coming down about \$1 a barrel. The fact was, that was a day late and \$7 a barrel short because the price is still way above the OPEC price target level.

We come to the floor today to say when the American people are hurting, there needs to be Presidential leadership. These gas prices are hurting my constituents. They are devastating to businesses and to consumers on the west coast, and they are driving up prices for goods and transportation in this country.

We have a proposal. It is to stop filling the Strategic Petroleum Reserve, No. 1. No. 2, it is for the Federal Trade Commission to get off the dime and look at these anticompetitive practices. I have introduced legislation, S. 1737. If the Bush administration does not like that bill, I would like to hear their proposal. Let's hear what they are going to do to stand up for the west coast consumer.

It seems the administration is busy filling the Strategic Petroleum Reserve with no regard for rising gas prices. They are busy with their campaign of inaction that seems to help nobody but the oil companies and will not direct the Federal Trade Commission to take steps now to protect the consumer. I think the American people deserve better.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. CHAMBLISS). Under the previous agree-

ment, the Senator from New York is recognized for 7½ minutes.

Mr. SCHUMER. I thank the Chair.

RICE TESTIMONY

Mr. SCHUMER. Mr. President, honestly, I had come to the floor to submit a resolution on behalf of myself and 14 of my colleagues, including Senators KENNEDY, BYRD, LIEBERMAN, CLINTON, CORZINE, DODD, JOHNSON, HOLLINGS, REID from Nevada, LAUTENBERG, DORGAN, DURBIN, DASCHLE, and NELSON to ask the President to allow Condoleezza Rice to testify under oath and in public. I heard NBC News has announced she will do just that. So the resolution is moot. I will make a couple of points, though.

One is I suppose all of the protestation that this would violate separation of powers has gone by the wayside. We all knew that was just a smokescreen because this commission is not congressional, and the whole theory of separation of powers is congressional.

The bottom line is the real reason the administration did not want Condoleezza Rice to testify, that they did not want her out there speaking about this, is quite apparent and had nothing to do with separation of powers.

The second point I make is to compliment the Commission. The Commission has done an incredible job. I think when Tom Kean, the former Governor of New Jersey, a Republican, one known for integrity, said the only way she would testify was under oath—she has been on every talk show. She is on television 24/7. So she has plenty of time to go public and say what she wants, but not what the Commission will ask her under oath.

Her statements, her public statements contradicted some of Dick Clarke's. Dick Clarke's were given under oath. Dick Clarke's were given after considerable criticism and vituperation directed from the White House and the attack machine that we know about here in Washington, the Republican attack machine. He stood by his story. So we now all wait with bated breath to hear what Condoleezza Rice will say under oath.

Mr. President, people as diverse as Colin Powell, JOHN MCCAIN, CHUCK HAGEL—Republicans—have talked about Dick Clarke's character. I have known Dick Clarke for a long time. He is a principled man. He has been a registered Republican. Whenever he met me—and I met him under the Clinton administration—he said he was a Republican. His one passion was to make America safe.

When all the information he had and all the work he and his staff had done were ignored, he became more and more frustrated. Dick Clarke's book is not aimed at political retribution. Dick Clarke's book is aimed at the truth. Like everywhere else, the Scriptures are right: The truth will set us free.

I hope Condoleezza Rice fully testifies, testifies truthfully. The Commission's goal is not to point fingers or blame; the Commission's goal is to find out what went wrong so we don't do it again. No one feels that more keenly than the families in my State who have lost loved ones and who yearn for the truth; not so much because it will ever bring their loved ones back but because they, in a charitable, an eleemosynary gesture, want to prevent it from happening again.

This is a good step. We ought to trust this Commission. It is bipartisan. It has many people of integrity on it. Let it go forward without stonewalling. The truth, the truth will set us free.

OPEC

I would like to bring one other issue forward now that something has been announced, and that is the issue of OPEC. Tomorrow the OPEC nations meet. I have a letter that has been signed by 19 of my colleagues as well urging the President, today, to speak out strongly and publicly to get OPEC to back off their counterproductive policy to restrict the amount of oil that flows into the market and raise the prices. It is counterproductive because it is going to cause our economy to slow down and hurt everybody.

But where is the voice of our President? He went out of his way to create a \$400 tax cut, to put money into the hands of average families to stimulate the economy. I was all for that part of his tax proposal. But now that tax cut is going to OPEC. By the end of the summer, the average American family with 2 cars will pay \$400 more than they paid for gasoline because of this recent price rise in OPEC. It is taking the wind out of our economy.

OPEC is a monopoly—an oligopoly. It is killing America. We have a solution, which is the Strategic Petroleum Reserve which President Clinton did dip into after, frankly, I pressured him for 6 months. That brought oil prices down and they stayed down. Where is President Bush? What is his policy to deal with oil prices now?

He talks about the energy bill, he talks about ANWR. At best, whether you agree with it or not, that is not going to put more oil on the market for 5 years. What are we doing now, as OPEC drains dollars from the American family's pockets? There is no extra money to take the vacation, build the extra room on the house, or buy the new car. The President fiddles, frankly, while Rome burns, while oil prices go through the roof, not because of a free market but because there is a monopoly here that is manipulating price.

OPEC always said they would keep the price no greater than \$28 a barrel. It is now about \$10 more than that. Now, with the Saudi announcement this morning that they are going to constrict oil production further, it should go above \$40 a barrel. That is a very bad sign for this economy and for the American taxpayer, the American family.

The President is silent. He has to tell his Saudi friends they have to come clean. He has a weapon, an ace in the hole at his disposal, and that is the Strategic Petroleum Reserve. In this letter, 19 of us urge him to speak out today before the OPEC meeting tomorrow and shake up the Saudis and shake up OPEC and tell them that, if they don't start producing more oil, we will use our Strategic Petroleum Reserve.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator has used 7½ minutes.

Under the previous order, the Senator from Illinois is recognized for 7½ minutes.

A GREAT INJUSTICE

Mr. DURBIN. Mr. President, I, too, commend those who were encouraging Condoleezza Rice to come before the 9/11 Commission publicly under oath to tell what she knows about the events leading up to 9/11 and those that followed. The fact she would argue it violated a precedent certainly didn't stand up once we looked at what happened in the past when we had others in her same position testifying before congressional committees.

Now that she has made this decision, along with the White House, to testify, I think it is a positive and good thing. This bipartisan Commission can now ask the hard questions that need to be asked.

I really come to the floor because, frankly, I think it is time for many of us who believe that a great injustice is being committed to speak out. The injustice I speak of is the reaction of this administration to the publication of the book "Against All Enemies: Inside America's War on Terror" by Richard Clarke.

To my knowledge, I have never met Mr. Clark nor worked with him. I know nothing about him personally. But I do know for 30 years Richard Clarke has been trusted by Presidents, Republican and Democrats alike, with some of the most important responsibilities in America.

If you read his book, and I have—at least the beginning of his book—you will find in the first chapter that Richard Clarke was the person America turned to on September 11 when we faced the greatest danger and chaos of modern time. He was the one at the controls in the White House, in the situation room, trying to bring some sense to the confusion that was hitting America. He was the one who was involved in working with the Secretary of Defense, the President, the Vice President, the Secretary of State, and all of the agencies of Government, to try to make sure America was safe at one of the most dangerous moments in our history. It is hard to believe this is the same man who has been so roundly discredited now by those in the White House. Those who trusted him on 9/11, who said to him, Use your judgment, your skill, and your experience to keep America safe at our most dangerous

moment, are now saying, Richard Clarke cannot be trusted when he speaks out from the heart, from his conscience, about the failures of this administration to prepare for the war on terrorism and to wage that war since 9/11.

Some of the statements that have been made on the floor of the Senate, particularly by the majority leader last week, I couldn't believe as I read the transcript today. I will quote from those statements. In the statement the majority leader said that he is:

... equally troubled someone who would sell a book that trades on their former service as a Government insider with access to classified information, our Nation's most valuable intelligence, in order to profit from the suffering surrounding what this Nation endured on September 11, 2001.

What is missing from this statement and other references by the majority leader is the fact that before Mr. Clarke published this book, it was submitted to the White House. They saw it in advance. If there were any suspicion of the leak of classified information by any agency, there was ample opportunity for them to weigh in before the publication of the book, and they did not do it. It is a false issue to raise today, that Richard Clarke has somehow violated this Nation's trust and disclosed classified information. That is not a fact that can be proven based on the fact that the White House itself had the ability to review that book in advance and determine whether anything crossed the line. To suggest Mr. Clarke is just doing this for the money is, frankly, to discredit him and to discredit a 30-year career in service to this country.

If we look at what is happening to Richard Clarke by this attack machine out of the White House, we see it is nothing new. The same thing happened to Larry Lindsey, an economic adviser to the President who misspoke by saying the war in Iraq was going to cost far more than the Bush administration ever acknowledged. It turned out Larry Lindsey was right, but because he spoke the truth he is gone.

General Shinseki, who misspoke in the eyes of the administration by telling us about the necessary commitment in American troops in a war in Iraq, was roundly criticized. He was the target of their attack.

In addition, Treasury Secretary Paul O'Neill stepped forward with his book, after serving in this administration, talking about some personal experiences he had with this administration and was immediately ridiculed by the people around the President.

Ambassador Joseph Wilson, who has served this country, who has contributed to both Democratic and Republican candidates, had the identity of his wife, who was working for the Central Intelligence Agency, disclosed by Robert Novak, columnist, on a tip from the White House in order to discredit Ambassador Joe Wilson.

In addition, Richard Foster, an actuary for the Department of Health and